

What happens to the spent nuclear fuel after it is unloaded from the reactor?

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The first step is unloading irradiated fuel assemblies from the reactor core and moving them to a temporary near-station storage facility. A special fuel handling machine performs this operation. While the activity and thermal emission of SNF (spent nuclear fuel) are high, it is stored in near-station spent fuel pools. After 3 - 5 years of storage, SNF can be removed from the plant site.